

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 26, 2018

The Honorable Jeff Sessions  
Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20530

The Honorable Alex M. Azar II  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20201

The Honorable Kirstjen M. Nielsen  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Attorney General Sessions, Secretary Azar, and Secretary Nielsen:

We are deeply concerned about the ongoing stress and trauma that innocent children have experienced since they were separated from their parents as part of the Administration's "zero tolerance" policy. These children now find themselves held in cages and other settings completely unacceptable and detrimental to the physical and emotional well-being of children. As the Administration seeks to quell the uproar created by this inhumane policy, we expect your departments will take every step necessary to reunite these children with their parents as quickly as possible.

However, media reports suggest that there is currently no plan to ensure the safe return of these children to their parents. In fact, early reports suggest that the departments and agencies detaining these children do not have current contact information for the vast majority of parents, which is deeply alarming and presents a significant obstacle in ensuring the timely reunification of families. We therefore call on you to provide us with your detailed plan for reuniting these children with their parents by close of business on Wednesday, June 27.

In addition, given the national concern for the well-being and health of these children, we ask that you designate a lead federal official to oversee family reunification efforts and to serve as a single point of contact for keeping Congress up to date on this effort. Specifically, we ask that this official provide us with a daily status update that includes, at a minimum, the following information:

**1. Status of Separated Family Members and Reunification Efforts.**

How many children have been separated from their parents and taken into Department of Homeland Security (DHS) or Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) custody since the "zero tolerance policy" was initiated in May? How many parents have had their children taken from them and been detained in federal custody?

- a. Of the total number of children taken into DHS custody, how many remain in DHS custody? What is the average length of stay for children in DHS or HHS custody? Please break this down by sex and age.
- b. Of the total number of children taken into DHS custody, how many have been transferred to Health and Human Services (HHS) / Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) custody? How many remain in ORR custody?
- c. Of the total number of children taken into DHS or HHS custody, how many have been reunited with their parents at a location inside the United States?
- d. Of the total number of children taken into DHS or HHS custody, how many have been reunited with their parents at a location outside the United States?
- e. Of the total number of children taken into DHS or HHS custody, how many have been released into the custody of a family member other than a parent? What is the plan for reuniting any such children with their parents?
- f. Of the total number of children taken into DHS or HHS custody, how many have been released to the custody of an adult who is not a family member? What is the plan for reuniting any such children with their parents?
- g. Of the parents of separated children taken into federal custody, how many remain in federal custody?
- h. Of the parents of separated children taken into federal custody, how many have been released from custody into the interior of the United States? Of these, how many have been reunited with their children? How many are still waiting to be reunited with their children?
- i. Of the parents of separated children taken into federal custody, how many have been released from custody and subsequently removed from the United States? Of these, how many have been reunited with their children? How many are still waiting to be reunited with their children?
- j. How are you connecting separated families and ensuring that all have access to counsel?
- k. For those parents who have been deported without their children, how is the U.S. government working with the respective consulates to assist with family reunification?

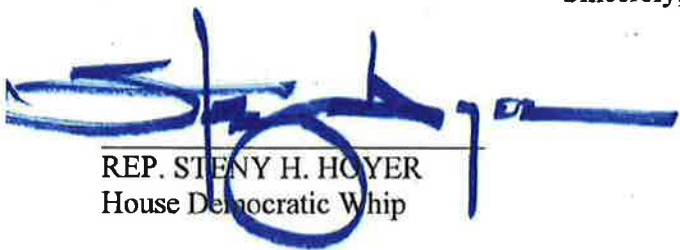
**2. Ensuring the Welfare and Well-being of Children Not Yet Reunited with Parents.**

Are all children who were separated from their parents pursuant to the “zero tolerance” policy currently being cared for in settings that meet the national standards set forth in the Flores Settlement?

- a. How many are being detained in small group settings or homes?
- b. How many are being detained in shelters unlicensed by the states in which they are located?
- c. How many are being warehoused in large facilities?
- d. How many are being held in cage-like enclosures?
- e. How many are being kept in tents?
- f. How many are being kept on military bases?
- g. How many do not have beds in which to sleep?
- h. How many do not have clothing appropriate to the temperature or other conditions in which they are being held?
- i. How many have been able to talk by phone at least once with their parents or guardians since they were separated? How many have been able to talk with their parents or guardians on a regular basis?
- j. How many, to date, have received medical attention? How many are receiving medical attention on an ongoing basis?
- k. How many, to date, have received trauma care or other counseling? How many are receiving counseling on an ongoing basis?
- l. How many, to date, have been afforded legal assistance?
- m. How many DHS and HHS personnel are able to speak the indigenous languages of some of the separated children and parents to ensure timely reunification?

We look forward to your response to our letter and to receiving the daily updates requested above.

Sincerely,



REP. STENY H. HOYER  
House Democratic Whip




REP. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM  
Congressional Hispanic Caucus Chair



REP. JOAQUIN CASTRO  
Congressional Hispanic Caucus First Vice-Chair



REP. RUBEN GALLEGO  
Congressional Hispanic Caucus Second Vice-Chair



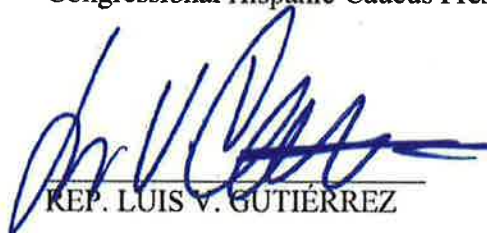
REP. PETE AGUILAR  
Congressional Hispanic Caucus Whip



REP. ADRIANO ESPAILLAT  
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REP. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO



REP. LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ



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REP. DARREN SOTO



REP. JIMMY GOMEZ



REP. RUBEN J. KIHUEN



REP. TONY CÁRDENAS



REP. BEN RAY LUJAN



REP. NANETTE DÍAZ BARRAGÁN



REP. PAUL M. GRIJALVA

  
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REP. J. LUIS CORREA

  
REP. SALUD O. CARBAJAL

  
REP. VICENTE GONZALEZ